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CIVIC ART IN NORTHERN EUROPE

A REPORT

TO THE

Art Commission of The City of
New York

BY

MILO ROY MALTBIÉ

OCTOBER 12, 1903

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Art Commission.

City Hall, New York City, October 12, 1903.

To the Art Commission of The City of New York:

Complying with a resolution adopted May 12, 1903, instructing me to investigate and report upon matters relating to the work of the Commission, namely, municipal art, City development, civic centres, public and quasi-public buildings, noteworthy modern instances of City embellishment, including boulevards, bridges, plazas, interior as well as exterior decorations of public and quasi-public buildings and matters connected therewith in European cities, I beg to submit the following report:

The cities visited were Copenhagen, Stockholm, Helsingfors, St. Petersburg, Moscow, Warsaw, Budapest, Vienna, Dresden, Berlin, Hamburg, Altona, Cologne, Brussels, Antwerp and Paris. Several days were spent also at the Dresden Municipal Exhibition. Maps, plans, prints, photographs, books and pamphlets relating to city embellishment in its many phases were secured from each city, which form as complete and as comprehensive a collection as exists upon this side of the Atlantic. When classified and thoroughly indexed, it should be of great usefulness, not only to City officials, but to artists, architects and private individuals interested in city embellishment. The work of collecting the material and data was greatly simplified by the generous courtesy of Secretary Hay, who placed the Consular service at my disposal, and of his Honor, Mayor Low, who secured the co-operation of foreign city officials.

The experience of European cities upon many essential features is a unit. It uniformly condemns, for example, the haphazard location of public buildings in narrow by-streets, and it uniformly approves the erection of monuments and fountains at the intersection of prominent thoroughfares. But every European city has not been equally successful in the selection of locations for its public buildings and monuments, in the arrangement and embellishment of its parks and open spaces, or in any of the many directions that public art has expression. Usually some one city has excelled all others in certain phases, and more attention will be given in this report to these pre-eminently successful instances than to others which are simply satisfactory and worthy of hearty commendation.

Foreign Cities at a Disadvantage.

In some respects the cities of Europe have been at a disadvantage. City building (Stadttebau) has undergone revolutionary changes in the last half century. Comprehensive systems of sewerage, lighting, water supply, transportation, etc., scarcely antedate 1850. Streets, once sufficiently wide for the ebb and flow of traffic, are too congested now, and conditions which were once assumed to be good enough are not now tolerated. The sordid ugliness, formerly accepted as the inevitable attendant upon certain phases of city life, is now generally condemned, and steps are everywhere being taken to infuse beauty even into the most congested and forbidding quarters of our cities. To meet these new requirements is evidently much more difficult for an old city, with an established ground plan inherited from the antiquated past, than for a young city which may draft its street plan and formulate de novo its building regulations.

Such was the disadvantageous position of almost all European cities when the movement for civic betterment started. The centre of urban life originally was the castle, the church, the marketplace or the palace, and around these a town grew without thought or plan. The necessity for fortifying the town and the consequently high value of land within the city walls compelled the utilization of every nook and corner, and as the town grew in population, congestion and filth outran all else. When the necessity for dealing with these conditions became apparent the situation was a most difficult one with which to deal. Not only was it imperative to condemn and reconstruct individual buildings, but the street plan of the city had often to be rearranged, new thoroughfares to be cut through crowded quarters, old streets widened and tortuous windings straightened. This work had to be done first, for no comprehensive scheme of beautifying the city could be projected until the ground plan had been determined. The changes in the street plans of European cities will be considered first in this report.

Reconstruction of Paris.

Probably more has been done in Paris in this direction than in any other city. The work was begun under Napoleon I., but the longest strides were taken after Baron Haussmann began his gigantic schemes involving the reconstruction of the whole city. From year to year the work has been continued. New streets and avenues are constantly being opened, every quarter has or has had its improvement scheme, and the foreigner who visits Paris only occasionally finds a new city at each visitation. Millions of francs are spent annually to let light and air into congested neighborhoods, to improve transportation facilities and to create boulevards and open spaces. As a result, Paris has a finer system of boulevards than any other European city, and its world-renowned beauty is largely due to these spacious tree-lined ave-

nues, parks and open spaces that are being multiplied and made more beautiful from year to year.

One of the most admirable features of this work is the systematic and regular way in which it is carried forward. Plans are drawn and adopted far in advance. As fast as funds are provided and the property can be acquired at a reasonable figure *, the scheme is pushed along, not spasmodically, but steadily, systematically and keeping pace with the growing needs of the city. It will be at least ten years before the plans now adopted on paper will actually be carried out, and long before these are completed others will have been prepared for still further improvements.

Value of a Comprehensive Scheme.

The advantage of laying out the street plan in advance of population may also be illustrated by reference to a Brussels suburb. The city officials, noting the steady growth of the town, perceived that in a few years houses would be springing up in this new locality. Recalling the bad effects of haphazard expansion and the great expense of rearranging streets after a district is built up, they attacked the problem in advance, with most excellent results. A beautiful park was laid out with trees, fountains, statuary and floral displays. Diagonal streets with pleasing vistas were provided. Streets of generous width and well adapted to rapid transportation followed. Focal points were emphasized by grass plots with sites for monuments or statues. Trees were planted along many of the less important streets as well as the boulevards. A new suburb was thus planned from its inception with comparatively little expense and no inconvenience to the public.

The wisdom of adopting a general scheme which may be modified in detail as occasion requires, but which will be planned in its general features in advance of urban growth, executed as rapidly as possible and in harmony with which parks will be constructed, monuments erected, public buildings located and other structures provided, is evidenced by foreign experience. There is continuity and harmony in the various improvements, and the work accomplished by each generation does not need to be undone by a succeeding generation. Instead of conflict, each additional improvement adds far more than indicated by its cost, and the improvements already carried out give tone and character to the new work, which would be lacking if there were no interdependence and if they had been carried out in a haphazard way. Few European cities were so fortunate in their early history as to have a well thought-out plan, and whatever of systematic arrangement has been since introduced is of recent date.

* Under the law a tenant who has an unexpired lease is allowed generous damages if the city takes the property he is occupying before the lease expires. Consequently, a building is often allowed to stand, although impeding the completion of the scheme, until the lease expires, by which means a considerable saving is made to the city.

"Ring" Boulevards.

No change has been more common than the transformation of outgrown fortifications into wide promenades or a succession of parks. Generally, one can trace the site of the old walls by this circle or series of concentric circles of boulevards. Among the most beautiful (besides those of Paris already mentioned) are those of Brussels, with their four or six rows of wide-spreading trees, grass-plots, walks, bridle paths, frequent benches for pedestrians, appropriately located fountains, monuments and statuary at commanding centres, and broad avenues running out in every direction from focal points to afford rapid communication with the suburban districts and shady walks and drives for the people living in the neighborhood; of Cologne, where the city is girded by a continuous succession of small parks, boulevards and plazas with floral displays, green sward, monuments, fountains, ivy-twined bits of the old city walls, and other adornments; of Bremen, where the configuration of the fortifications is still seen in the winding lake and the irregularity of the parks; of Hamburg, where the ring parks are very spacious, where the moats have been turned into lakes, where the irregularities of the old fortifications have been utilized to give variety and rusticity, and where many public buildings have been located either in or bordering on the parks; not to mention the less magnificent but quite successful ring boulevards in Budapest, Prague, Cracow, Leipsic, Breslau, Gotenburg, Copenhagen, Nijny-Novgorod, Moscow, and the many French cities patterned after Paris.

The grandest and most comprehensive scheme is in Vienna. Like other cities, it had in 1857 very elaborate fortifications, beyond which the city was rapidly extending, rendering them of less and less value as a protection against invasion. Soon after the accession of Francis Joseph, he ordered their removal, and out of the three-cornered fight over the disposal of the land, between the City of Vienna, the Kingdom of Austria and the Crown family itself, a very fortunate compromise was arranged. A portion of the immense area formerly given over to the walls, moats, glacis and drill-ground was to be laid out in broad, tree-lined boulevards girdling the inner city, a portion to be made into parks, a portion used as sites for public buildings, and still another portion (so vast was the area) sold to provide funds out of which to construct artistic public buildings. The whole scheme was so intelligently planned, including the treatment of the park areas and the ring-strasse, the location of the public buildings with adjoining open spaces and parks, the erection of appropriate monuments at vantage points, and the branching of other boulevards at proper places, that there is nothing of the kind in all Europe that is more imposing, more harmoniously effective, or more artistic. Although begun and in large measure completed many years ago, improvements and extensions are being made from year to year.

St. Petersburg—A Modern City.

Of all European cities of importance, St. Petersburg has probably had least need to reconstruct its street plan. This is due principally to its youth (St. Petersburg celebrated its 200th anniversary at the same time New York commemorated its 250th birthday) and to the foresight of Peter the Great and Elizabeth, who made most of the principal streets of great width and laid out many open spaces in the very first days of the city's history. By so doing they secured for the city, at little cost, what other cities, because of the lack of foresight and appreciation upon the part of their early rulers, have been compelled to purchase at great expense and inconvenience. St. Petersburg vies with Paris as regards the generous width of the streets and the expanse of open spaces.*

Variety of Street Plans.

The street plans of European cities show the greatest variety. No two cities are exactly alike. Amsterdam and Budapest have series of streets forming concentric semi-circles with the waterfront as a diameter and another series of radiating streets. Antwerp has a similar system, but with less regularity and a larger number of small streets running in every direction. Brussels has a ring boulevard bounding the inner city, with avenues radiating not from the centre of the city but from the ring, one wide boulevard running through the business centre connecting the two principal depots, one at the south and the other at the north, and a few other boulevards connecting the smaller nerve centres of the city. Vienna, Moscow, Dresden and Leipsic resemble Brussels, except that the central portion of these cities cannot boast of such fine new boulevards as Boulevard Anspach. Karlsruhe has a system of radial streets diverging from the Schloss with almost mathematical precision, overlaid with a few rectangular streets. In Paris one finds concentric rings of boulevards, a system of avenues radiating from the Louvre and Place du Châtelet, and still others radiating from such important local centres as Place de l'Etoile, Place de la Bastille, Place de la République and Place d'Italie. Stockholm, St. Petersburg, Hamburg, Cologne, to some extent Berlin and most other cities of importance, have avenues varying in size and importance which approach a common nucleus—the business centre of the city. Stockholm possesses the rectangular system, but the axes of different sections are not parallel, so that there are many streets that make acute angles in crossing. Still other cities have such a mixture of short streets, twisting and turning, that it is impossible to find that there is any system whatever. This is true of the older cities and the older portions, but seldom of the new suburban areas or of schemes adopted in the last half century.

* The creation of such large blocks makes interior courtways necessary to afford light and air. Here one finds what very closely resembles our "rear tenement," with no direct access to the street,—a hospitable retreat for the dirty and criminal classes. In many cases these interior courts are utilized as gardens, which are very attractive and refreshing.

Principles Suggested.

Local conditions—inherited street plan, topography, the location of railroad stations and many other factors—determine which of these plans is best for any particular city, but quick transportation demands the development of civic centres with a system of avenues radiating from the business and other important local centres, and toward this end European cities are working. Such a system also adds to the attractiveness of the city, for the focal points afford good locations for public buildings and monuments. They not only create beautiful vistas, but give to public structures the dignity and grace which they lack if located in narrow streets, shut in by other buildings.

It is also advisable that boulevards should be so planned as to connect the parks of a city. Such parkways may be so treated as to become small parks in themselves without interfering with their use as thoroughfares. Witness Rue de la Loi connecting the Royal Park with Parc du Cinquantenaire, or Avenue Louise, Boulevard de Waterloo and Boulevard du Régent binding together the Bois de la Cambre and the Royal Park in Brussels, or the Johann Georgen Allee extending from the business centre of Dresden to the Grosse Garten, and Andrassy-strasse similarly situated in Budapest.

The water front of the city also offers an excellent location for promenades or boulevards, as instanced by the much-frequented Lange Linie along the harbor of Copenhagen, Strandvägen in Stockholm, the Franz Joseph Promenade along the Danube in Budapest, Boulevard Frère-Orban bordering the Meuse in Liège, and river streets in other cities, especially Amsterdam, where the canals are generally lined with at least one row of trees on each side.

Street Embellishment.

European experience further demonstrates that it is not vital that an avenue or boulevard be laid out in a straight line for a long distance. Indeed, there are few prominent thoroughfares that continue an unbroken line for such a long distance as does Broadway from Bowling Green to Grace Church. This is partially due to conditions which could not be remedied, such as an inherited street plan of crooked streets, and partially to the avowed intent of those who laid out the new avenues. The street that runs straight ahead for miles, approaching only a blurred and characterless horizon, is not to be compared as regards its artistic merit with the avenue which varies its course and thus permits the eye of the traveler to rest upon a column, an arch, a fountain or a facade of a public building. Imagine the Avenue de l'Opéra without the Paris Grand Opera House at its terminus, Rue Royale without the Madeleine, Avenue Victoria without the Hôtel de Ville, the Vienna Burggring without the Parliament building, the Reichsrathsstrasse without the Votiv Kirche, the Alsterdamm, Hamburg, without the new Wilhelm I. monument and City Hall; Unter den Linden without the Brandenburg Gate, Rue de la Régence, Brussels, without

the Palace of Justice at one end and the statue of Godfrey de Bouillon at the other, and hundreds of other instances from every nook and corner of Europe.

Where there is a long, straight boulevard, the most artistic results have been obtained by the erection of columns, arches, fountains and statues at frequent intervals to break the monotony of the view. The distance between these should not be great. As soon as one is out of easy view, another should rise. An instance of the artistic effect of this sort of treatment is the Avenue des Champs-Élysées and the promenade through the Jardin des Tuileries, where the monument to Gambetta, the Arc de Triomphe de Carrousel, the Obélisque de Louqsor, the Arc de Triomphe de l'Etoile and several fountains at frequent intervals not only add immensely to the beauty of the avenue, but in turn are benefited by the avenue which adds to their beauty. Other well-known instances are the multiplicity of monuments, statues and fountains in the ring boulevards of Paris, Brussels, Antwerp, Cologne, Vienna, Copenhagen, Moscow and other cities, and in the focal points of the street plan of Berlin, Dresden, Budapest, St. Petersburg, etc.

The location of public structures is being given the thought and thorough attention it deserves, and the value of beautiful vistas is more and more being appreciated. If there is one thing for which one may be thankful for the jumble of streets that characterizes the older portions of European cities, it is that many vistas are thus provided.

Tree Planting.

That trees and green grass plots should be used upon all streets and avenues wherever possible is so apparent that it hardly needs mention. Nothing adds so much to the beauty of a street or so tempers the heat and glare of hot summer days as lines of widespreading trees and plots of green grass with an adequate supply of benches for those who wish to rest and enjoy the changing scenes. The ample provisions made by many European cities have turned many boulevards into continuous park systems.

At frequent intervals the avenue is often widened into a *rond point*, a circle or a square with flowers, shrubs and statuary, which form a pleasing terminus for intersecting streets that may be too narrow to have trees of their own. Objectionable structures for the convenience of the public are hidden by clumps of bushes and trees, and trolley tracks, whose presence upon the boulevards is imperative to accommodate the traveling public, are almost hidden by lines of trees, which also furnish cool shade and make a car ride doubly pleasant. They also hide trolley poles, if overhead wires are used, and smother the noise made by the cars.

To prevent ugly breaks in the symmetry of tree-lined avenues, dead trees should promptly be removed and others of the same kind and size inserted. In some European cities there is carelessness, with most inartistic results, which contrast sharply

with the harmony, symmetry and beauty of such boulevards as the Wiener-strasse in Dresden, Avenue Louise in Brussels, Avenue du Bois de Boulogne in Paris or the Prater-strasse in Vienna. Even the historic Unter den Linden is marred because of the failure to replant in harmony.

Street Fixtures.

The beauty of city streets depends not alone upon their direction, their width, their arrangement or even upon the trees, monuments and structures that border them, but also upon the character of the street fixtures which must be placed at frequent intervals, such as lamp-posts (gas and electric), street name signs, house numbers, tramway stations, public comforts, letter boxes, fire alarms, trolley poles, etc. These appear before the eye so constantly that they determine very largely the character of a street, and an otherwise attractive thoroughfare may be marred greatly by ugly fixtures. Because of their seeming unimportance, they have been the last to receive attention in the municipal art movement not only in the United States but in Europe. It was only recently that the Belgian National Society for the introduction of art in the streets—the first of its kind—was inaugurated, and instances of ugly street fixtures may still be drawn from almost every city, while it is more difficult to cite artistic examples in this direction than in almost any other.

However, where there is art feeling or a widespread appreciation of the beautiful, there art finds expression consciously or unconsciously. As one would expect, the most artistic street fixtures are generally found in France and Belgium, and the least artistic in Russia. Paris, Brussels and Copenhagen have the finest street lamps. In the last mentioned city, openwork steel construction has been utilized for electric lamp and trolley poles more effectively than elsewhere. Budapest has a few posts where flowers and foliage plants have been used to advantage. The street name signs of Paris, consisting of a blue enameled plate set at an angle with the post so as to reflect the light of the lamp and thus be legible day or night, are both artistic and useful, and the same scheme has been adopted for indicating house numbers. The tramway stations of Brussels are improving year by year, and are vastly superior to those of Paris. Vienna and Budapest have the most tasteful public comfort stations.

The Paris isles of safety are both useful and ornamental, for an artistic lamp-post is usually placed in the centre and sometimes it contains a clock as well. (The utilitarian side of this combination is worthy of mention here, for by placing the electric light in the middle of the street it lights both sides and reduces the number of street lamps to two-thirds or one-half the number necessary where the posts are placed on the walks.) Many other European cities have followed the same plan. Ornamental clocks, such as on the Jungfernstieg, Hamburg, are found in some cities, but their number is not large.

Street Advertising.

But why even those cities that have progressed farthest in civic art should tolerate the advertising kiosks, often ugly in themselves, and made still more ugly with their gaudy placards, even upon the most attractive boulevards and sometimes in the parks, is difficult to comprehend. Having spent large sums to make the boulevards and parks attractive, it seems strange that for the small return from advertising privileges the city authorities should be willing to nullify in part their own efforts to create beauty. Often the cities that have done the most to restrict private advertising signs and to eliminate "sandwich men," "banner men" and wagon bill-boards are the very ones which err most egregiously as to kiosks. Nothing can account for this except reluctance to relinquish any source of public revenue, however small.

Some cities have attempted to lessen the bad effect and indirectly to improve the character of the advertisements by making the structures themselves artistic, and some improvement is manifest in this direction. The number of kiosks could also be reduced upon the business streets even where they serve the useful purpose of news-stands and sub-postal stations. The same may be said of many of the public comfort stations in Paris, which are used as advertising boards. There is room for great improvement, and their objectionable features are very repulsive to those whose senses have not been deadened by constant familiarity.

Height of Buildings Limited.

The beauty of city streets is also greatly affected by the character of the buildings which line them. Public buildings are, of course, very few comparatively, and if private initiative is to be restrained and directed into proper channels it must be done largely through statutes and city ordinances. Probably the most common restriction, for it is practically universal, is that limiting the heights of buildings. Generally it varies with the width of the street: the greater width, the greater height permitted up to a certain maximum which may not be exceeded by anyone. The following extract from the Paris regulations, as amended last year, is representative, for while the precise ratio of street width to building height is not the same in all cities, the ratio in Paris is fairly representative:

If the road is less than 12 metres (39 feet) wide, the height of the building must not exceed the width of the street by more than 6 metres (19½ feet). On a roadway 12 metres wide, the house may therefore be 18 metres (59 feet) high, and for every additional metre in the breadth of the road a quarter of a metre (about 10 inches) may be added to the height of the house until the limit of 20 metres (nearly 66 feet) to the eaves is reached, but no building may exceed that.

These restrictions have had far reaching effect. Not only are the streets and lower stories of the buildings given abundant sunlight and air, but the skyline is made uniform. The maximum height is so low that no landlord now desires to erect a

building with less height; the land is too valuable. But he cannot go beyond the limit, and consequently structures are neither squat nor towering. Aside from the slight variations due to the different styles of architecture, variations that are interesting rather than objectionable, the skyline is frequently uniform and pleasing.

Building Regulations.

Besides the restriction of building heights, there are numerous provisions in the code of every European city regulating, for instance, the width of balconies, the projection of cornices, the size of windows and the character of lamps, signs, awnings, fences, doorways, building materials, etc. Sometimes these regulations are not the same for the entire city, but vary from locality to locality. In a residential quarter, for example, the proportion of the lot which may be built upon is much smaller than in the business district. In Dresden it has gone so far that a certain kind of iron fence, so many feet high, no more, no less, must be used in certain residential quarters.

The aim of these provisions, in part, is to prevent the erection of ugly buildings and of buildings so dissimilarly located and so different in style and architecture as to mar the attractiveness of the street. Usually they are quite effective, but they do tend, if carried too far, to produce monotony rather than harmony. The striking similarity of the houses upon many of the streets of Paris is sometimes attributed to an excess of governmental restriction, but that it is not the inevitable result is proved by the beauty and lack of monotony on other streets where the same regulations are in force. Indeed, there is little in Paris which is more monotonous than the lines of brown stone houses in New York City, and certainly these were not the result of excessive municipal restriction. However, many architectural features that exist in European cities are due to legal restrictions, and not infrequently the results are beneficial rather than objectionable.

Nevertheless, there are not lacking many instances of inartistic streets. Unter den Linden suffers from the lack of harmony in architecture and skyline. An old building of two or three stories frequently stands next to one of six or seven. Blank walls, sometimes with obtrusive advertisements, appear at frequent intervals. Characterless facades elbow those most pleasing. Yet this street is the centre of Berlin, and held by the Germans in almost sacred reverence. To remedy these defects, there is now a law which requires that every structure built upon Unter den Linden shall previously be approved by the Kaiser, this provision being supplementary to the multitudinous restrictions of the building code. As yet the Kaiser's veto has not improved the street, for the old buildings are being replaced only very slowly.

Indirect Methods.

The tardy reconstruction of city property everywhere hinders artistic achievement. Old buildings will be maintained by unprogressive landlords, even long after it would pay to tear them down and build anew. The injurious effect of these dilapidated or inartistic structures is very much greater than their relative size. Some European cities have tried to encourage early rebuilding by exempting all new buildings from certain taxes for a specified period—e. g., five years. The saving thus made is often sufficient to induce the landlord to rebuild a number of years before he otherwise would.

Among the many ways of indirectly improving the beauty of the streets, there is one more which deserves more than mere mention, viz., the award of prizes to the owners of the more artistic facades upon new streets. More has been done in Brussels and Paris in this direction, I believe, than elsewhere. When a new street is opened, the city authorities announce prizes for the most artistic facades, the competition not to be completed until the whole street has been lined with buildings. The prizes are usually so considerable (often \$4,000, \$2,500 and \$1,500 in Brussels, and one-half of the street tax and medals in Paris) that they arouse a lively competition among house-owners and architects. The general opinion is that the expenditure is fully warranted by the results obtained.

Similar competitions have been held for artistic advertising signs. The immediate results of this experiment have not been so encouraging, but attention has been called to the value and importance of beautiful store signs, and in Brussels particularly, on Rue de la Madeleine, a number of artistic signs may be seen.

Floral Decoration.

Municipal effort towards street adornment is occasionally supplemented by organized individual action, although as a rule the number of private societies in Europe that are laboring for city improvement is much less than in the United States. One of the most interesting schemes is that of floral decoration, which has been carried further in Dresden than in any other city visited. It was started by an organization of private individuals, who not only bewailed the unattractiveness of the city streets, but who were determined to do something. After much labor incident to experimenting with all sorts of flowers, plants, vines, small shrubs, window boxes, etc., the society made recommendations, agitated for the adoption of its plan and started to put it into operation. The plan was to induce every holder and tenant in the city to decorate his yards, buildings and window ledges with plants, vines or shrubs. City officials were besieged to set the example, and they decorated most of the city buildings. The newspapers were enlisted. Many sections of the city were personally canvassed. Prizes were awarded for the most artistic results. The movement has become so popular that

even in the poorer quarters of the city, where the cost of keeping up the window boxes means something of a sacrifice, one may find whole blocks where there is hardly a window that does not have its flowers. In the well-to-do quarters the displays are often most elaborate.

The transformation of the city has been marked. Nothing so impresses one, when for the first time he steps out of the depot, and sees window after window with its bunch of geraniums, nasturtiums, begonias, vines or foliage plants. These splashes of color give a tone to a building and street that is refreshing beyond description. We are so accustomed to a total lack of color, or, more correctly, to the dull impressionless effect of city streets, that even a small bunch of green, yellow, purple or red catches our eye at once and pleases us out of all proportion to its size. What must be the effect upon those who have few opportunities to see the flowers, grass and trees of the parks, and must content themselves with the window boxes?

Color Schemes in Russian Cities.

Although Dresden far excels all other cities in this direction, many of them, especially in Germany and Austria, can boast of results well worthy of imitation. It remains for Russian cities, however, to show what may be done with color upon a large scale. There, the exteriors of the buildings, almost without exception, are covered with plaster. The walls are of brick—the ordinary cheap, not pressed brick—and so easily affected by the weather as to make necessary a coat of plaster to protect them. This plaster cannot withstand the weather, and every year it must be repaired and repainted. It is this annual coat of paint, applied in the summer, which offers the opportunity for the introduction of color. Ordinary whitewash is too prosaic for most Russians. Their buildings must be garbed in brighter colors.

The opportunity afforded for the production of artistic results is evident. The city might be made a Pan-American Exhibition upon an enormous scale, and instead of one color scheme, there might be an endless variety, which under proper management might rival the heavenly city of Revelations. But where there is possibility of great achievement, there is also possibility of great failure, and one can easily imagine what lurid results might be produced if bad taste and extreme individualism went hand in hand.

The actual results are varied. There are instances where either by chance, by co-operation or by governmental supervision, there is a blending of colors, a harmony of decoration, a unity of treatment that calls forth great admiration. I am inclined to the opinion that these artistic results are more often due to chance than to plan, for where opportunity is greatest, good results are apt to be lacking. For instance, the Place Dvortsoy is bordered by the Royal Winter Palace, the Ermitage, the Empirical Archives, the Ministries of Foreign Affairs and Finance, the Administration Building, the Summer Garden, the Admiralty Building and Alex-

ander Park, which leads to another group of governmental buildings to the west. What artist with a sense of color would not jump at the opportunity of planning a scheme of decoration for these buildings! What wonderful results could be obtained! Yet last summer each building was being repainted without any apparent reference to the colors of those next to it. The Winter Palace was receiving a light chocolate coat, uniformly applied to columns, walls, cornices and statuary—the usual way. The Ermitage—the art museum—had been dressed in light buff; the Empirical Archives in white; the Ministries in dark brown; the Admiralty in light yellow, and still another building in black.

Even the Kremlin in Moscow—"the sacred city of the Czars"—showed great lack of harmony in spots. The church of St. Alexis, with its red walls, white trimmings and green roof, was quite attractive; and the Church of Ste. Catherine in blue and gilt was equally satisfactory. The Petit Palais in yellow and white was not so distasteful when considered alone, or even in conjunction with the Church of St. Alexis, which it elbowed on the left, but when viewed with the Church of Ste. Catherine on the right, the effect was inartistic.

Other instances might be cited not only of inartistic methods of decorating public buildings, but of bad results arising from the juxtaposition of buildings, pleasing in themselves but out of harmony with each other. Indeed, this is the direction in which there is most to criticise. There is little co-operation between private individuals or different departments of the government.

In Moscow, much more than in St. Petersburg, there seems to be a color sense, and not infrequently one finds a group of houses that harmonize; and where there is good taste the beauty of the street, perhaps already lined with trees, rivets one to the spot and calls forth words of warm admiration. I remember well one group on Nikolskaïa, in a business centre of Moscow, which was charming, and another in Krivokolienni Péréoulok. The number of pleasing buildings, when considered without reference to those adjoining, was endless, especially in the suburban districts. The view from the top of Ivan Véliky, on the summit of the Kremlin, is beautiful and impressive. The bright colors of the buildings are toned down by distance; the trees afford ample green for the setting of the picture; the dull red tiles of the roofs add another color to the background, and the brilliant colors of the church spires and turrets give just enough life and variety to the scene.

The attempt to introduce color has not been confined to paint or whitewash. Mosaics on facades are quite common in Russian cities, and occasionally are to be found elsewhere. The subjects and artistic merit vary greatly. Sometimes they are simply decorative effects; sometimes of a semi-advertising character and sometimes representations of important events. The walls of church edifices frequently contain mosaics representing Bible scenes. In Budapest a few of the new public buildings are covered with colored glazed bricks. The new Postal Savings Bank, for ex-

ample, is in light blue with gilded trimmings. The structures which cover the entrances and exits to the subway stations are built of many colored tiles.

Small Parks and Open Spaces.

In this connection, it should be noted that much of the pleasure derived from trees, shrubs and grass plots in streets, boulevards and parks comes from the refreshing green of the foliage; and the step from boulevards to parks is a very short one, for a wide boulevard with settees, trees, shrubs, grass plots, twining vines, a streamlet of water, with occasional fountains, as may be seen in Cologne, is virtually an elongated park. Indeed, it is often better than the same area in one large park. It benefits more people. It is at their very doors, and may be enjoyed morning, noon and night without a long trip to a distant park.

From the viewpoint of number and wide distribution, probably Stockholm, Dresden, Berlin and Vienna are the cities best supplied with small parks. In Vienna the ring of parks which now occupy the site of the old city walls is very beautiful, but the central portions of the city are not well supplied, especially where population is densest. The newer portions are better off, which is true of all cities, and easily accounted for by the recent origin of the park movement and the high cost of land in the older (the denser) districts.

Berlin has more small parks in the centre of the city than Vienna, but cannot boast of so effective a park ring; they are more scattered and are not bound together by boulevards. In Stockholm, also, the parks are quite well distributed. Scandinavian cities generally control churchyards, maintaining them, keeping them open for the public, providing benches and chairs, and even erecting statuary, thus practically making small parks of them.

Moscow is fairly well supplied with small parks, and, viewing it from Ivan Vélíky, one infers that the city is thronged with small parks, so constantly do the patches of green appear among the buildings. Not all are parks, however, but more frequently small private gardens. Except in the districts given over entirely to business buildings, each house commonly has a garden with trees and flowers. These are not seen from the streets because high walls shut them in, but to the householder they serve every purpose of a small park. The chief objection is that in the poorer quarters, where they are needed most, these gardens are not common. In St. Petersburg they are still fewer in number, except in the districts inhabited by the very wealthy.

St. Petersburg and Moscow have a considerable number of large open spaces, the most important being Place Dvortsovy, Place Krasnaïa and Place des Théâtres. But these are open spaces literally, they do not have a tree or a shrub, or even a bit of green grass, merely a wide stretch of level ground paved with cobblestones, over which wagons rumble with abundant noise. To be sure they give a comprehensive view of the public buildings, but such large open spaces dwarf low buildings, and if

the ground were laid out with walks, drives, trees, fountains, monuments and grass plots there might still be unimpeded views of the buildings, and the parks thus constructed would be the most beautiful spots of the city. But such a treatment does not appear to have been thought of, or if broached, to have met with approval.

One of the most effective open spaces where grass, shrubs and trees have not been used is Place de la Concorde, Paris. But here their places are taken by fountains, the Obélisque de Louqsor, ornamental electroliers and statues, and it is bounded upon two sides by parks. The Raadhus-Plads in Copenhagen, the eastern end of Unter den Linden, the Dam in Amsterdam and the Place de l'Hôtel de Ville in Paris are practically vacant spaces, but necessarily so, owing to the immense traffic that flows through them, and they are not so large as to dwarf the public buildings that border them. However, where it is possible, the use of grass, flowers, trees, statuary, fountains or monuments add greatly to the beauty of an open space.

Rural Parks.

Passing to large parks, one should note the series of parks and lakes which circle the business centre of Copenhagen. Their natural beauty has been improved by numerous statues, principally the gifts of Herr Carl Jacobsen, a wealthy Copenhagen brewer, who presented the old Carlsberg brewery to the city as a permanent endowment, and of his son, who has continued the work begun by his father.

The Tiergarten of Berlin stands quite alone; it has a character all its own. For impressive solitude, for grand, majestic trees, for cool, shaded walks with no canopy but the closely interwoven branches far above, it is without a rival. In the Bois de Boulogne, Paris, there are sections where dense shrubbery and ivy-clad trees remind one of a jungle, of a southern wilderness, but the Tiergarten resembles a northern forest. Each in its way is wonderful and a source of enjoyment to millions.

Schoenbrunn, Vienna, is quite different. It represents the formal French gardening of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. The gorgeous floral displays on the parterre, the dense hedges, the precision of the walks and drives, the harmonious arrangement of fountains, monuments and sculptures attract thousands every Sunday. Other well-known instances of this style of gardening are the gardens of the Luxembourg and the Palais Royal, Paris, Swinger-Hof Gardens, Dresden, Alexander Park, St. Petersburg, and Lustgarten, Berlin. But the finest instances are, of course, the gardens at Fontainebleau and Versailles, which are so well known as not to call even for a summary of their beauties.

One might continue to enumerate park after park that possesses certain interesting features—where beauty, either natural or artificial, is a source of keen enjoyment. There is not a city in which some provision has not been made, and usually there are several parks of considerable size. The aim seems to be to supply every quarter, so that no one will be obliged to travel a long distance to reach a

park, to hold the balance between large and small parks (for each class has certain advantages not possessed by the other), between rural and formal treatment, and to make all as beautiful and as attractive as possible. From the point of view of number and area the citizen of Paris can reach more in an afternoon's excursion than the citizen of any other city. At least 20,000 acres, not including the tree-lined boulevards which are parks in a sense, are open to selection.

Gardens and Playgrounds.

Mention should also be made in this connection of the botanical and zoological gardens to be found in many cities. They are frequently very artistic both as to landscape gardening and buildings. The zoological gardens in Berlin and Amsterdam are deserving of special mention. The botanical garden of Brussels is also most artistic. Located upon the side of a hill, it has utilized the advantages of its location and has combined sculpture with landscape gardening with such good effect that none excels it. Then, too, the cemeteries should be noted, for these are frequently under municipal control. The beauties of Père-Lachaise, Paris, are so well known that every tourist aims to visit it.

Not infrequently European parks appear to the stranger as poorly maintained. This is due to the fact that the public is often permitted to use the parks as recreation grounds. Shows, games and amusements of all sorts are given concessions, and they are freely patronized by the large numbers who throng the parks. "Keep off the grass" is not much in evidence here. Of course such parks, or the portions of the large parks given over to the free and unrestricted use of the public, are not so beautiful as those carefully cared for, but the pleasure and benefit derived from the former are out of all proportion to the loss in art.

Successful Methods.

The methods used to beautify parks are as varied as the landscapes to be treated and as numerous as the designers. The most artistic results have been produced (1) where statuary, fountains and monuments have effectively been introduced in landscape gardening, e. g., Jardin des Tuileries, Vienna Ringstrasse, Copenhagen parks, and possibly the Sieges-Allée, Berlin; (2) where flowers, shrubs and trees have been harmoniously combined, e. g., Kungsträdgård in Stockholm, Orsted park in Budapest, Stadtpark in Vienna and Jardin des Tuileries in Paris; and (3) where natural conditions have been utilized, e. g., the lofty hill park (Brunnsparken) in Helsingfors, extending into the harbor, with its monument to the shipwrecked, the cascade park in Brussels, where a stream of water is carried by successive cascades from a fountain on the hill to a tree-bordered lake at the foot, all to be surrounded with statuary, the mountainous Blocksberg of Budapest, the river parks of Liège, Munich, Prague, Altona, Nuremberg and Rotterdam, and the island parks of Vienna, St. Petersburg and Stockholm.

Natural conditions so largely determine the effectiveness of parks that location becomes a most important factor, and often the areas having the most natural advantages are those least adapted for other purposes. Such precipitous hills as stud the old city of Ofen in Budapest could be used with difficulty as residential or business districts, but they make beautiful parks, and statuary, fountains, flowers, etc., are as effectively utilized as in the level plains of the Stadtwäldchen. Stockholm wisely dedicated long ago the rocky wilds of Djurgård to public use. Copenhagen has the romantic park of Fredericksberg-Have. Hamburg has taken advantage of the Binnen and Aussen-Alsters, in the centre of the city, and converted the shores into parks. But Antwerp has forgotten its river frontage or fails to appreciate its advantages as a site for a park.

Large rural and country parks may be located where nature offers the greatest inducement, and the principal lesson to be learned from European cities is that sites should be chosen far in advance of urban growth, as near the heart of the city as possible, and the public afforded every facility for reaching them quickly, easily and cheaply. Indeed, proper transit facilities are as important as the park itself, for it has no value unless used, and its beauty is wasted if not generally enjoyed. In this connection, one very utilitarian lesson should be learned, viz., that as the parks are for the public, restaurant facilities at moderate rates are much more important than stylish cafés with elaborate menus and expensive service.

The ideal system of small parks and playgrounds is one which supplies every district of the city, and the poorer districts best of all. Their limited area makes it impossible to depend upon natural advantages for artistic development, and resort must be had to artificial treatment. This plan has been followed everywhere in Europe, as evidenced by the many instances cited above and others that might be mentioned.

Union of Parks and Public Buildings.

In one very important respect European cities are far in advance, viz., the combination of small parks and open spaces with sites for public buildings. We are apt to stow away our public buildings among private structures, upon narrow streets and in out-of-the-way places.

European cities upon the other hand commonly locate their public buildings so as to front upon parks or open places. The attractiveness of the park is thus increased, owing to the presence of beautiful buildings, and its use as a park is not interfered with, but instead facilitated and encouraged. The park in turn adds to the beauty of the buildings, as the open area permits it to be viewed from the proper distance and with the proper prospective, which is impossible in a narrow street.

Instances could be cited from almost every city in continental Europe. Those best known are the Louvre and the Tuileries Gardens, the Grand Palais and the

Petit Palais des Beaux-Arts with the surrounding gardens, and the Trocadéro, with its park sloping down to the Seine (Paris), the Prefecture and Palais des Beaux-Arts upon the Place de la République (Lille), the Royal Library in the Humlegård (Stockholm), the Art Museum, court houses, etc., in the ring parks (Hamburg), the Admiralty, the Senate, St. Synode, Ministry of War, bordering Alexander Park, the Museum to Alexander III., with parks and open spaces on all sides (St. Petersburg), Stadt-Halle in park (Mainz), the Parliament Building in the corner of the Tiergarten, the museums, the new Cathedral and the Royal Castle surrounding the Lustgarten (Berlin), and the long procession of buildings along the Ringstrasse (Vienna), beginning at the east with the industrial museums and ending at the north with the Bourse, each fronting upon a park or in a park or partially surrounded by parks. If there is any doubt as to the contribution made to civic art by such a union of park and public structure, imagine any one of the buildings just mentioned robbed of its location and snugly stowed away in a narrow street.

Open Spaces and Boulevards.

It is not always possible to have a park adjoining a public building; traffic may be too great. In such cases an open space is often provided, occupied, if at all, only by a few small structures, such as a monument, a fountain or a statue. This accomplishes the same result as produced by a park, for the public building is thereby given the dignity which should attach to public buildings and which cannot be theirs if elbowed by every tumble-down shanty or overshadowed by every towering shaft. How must of the beauty of the Palace of Justice and Hôtel de Ville in Brussels, the Parliament Building, Royal Courts and Ministry of Education in Budapest, the University, Arsenal and Imperial Bank in Berlin, city halls in such cities as Havre, Warsaw, Breslau, Dijon, Strassburg, Dresden, Paris and many other cities, and the Pantheon, the Hôtel des Invalides, Notre Dame, Ministry of Marine, and the Old Louvre in Paris is due to the open space in front of each?

In still other instances public buildings are located along wide streets, avenues or boulevards (e. g., Palace of Justice in Antwerp, and the string of buildings along Ludwigstrasse in Munich), upon the river front (e. g., University of Liege, Parliament in Budapest, and the numerous public buildings along the Neva in St. Petersburg and the Seine in Paris), upon elevations (e. g., the Kremlin, Moscow, the Palace of Justice, Brussels, and the Royal Palace in Budapest), at the termini of bridges (e. g., the Institute opposite the Pont des Arts in Paris and the Maximilianeum opposite Maximilians-Brücke in Munich), and at the termini or turning points of streets. The many advantages of this last suggestion have been discussed in preceding paragraphs.

Civic Centres.

Many cities have gone still further and have grouped several public buildings around a park or an open space or along a prominent street or boulevard, thus creat-

ing a centre of civic life and interest. In Berlin Unter den Linden and the Lustgarten form the nucleus where cluster palaces, Cathedral, museums, Arsenal, University, ministries, Opera House, fountains, monuments and statuary. In other parts of the city there are small local centres, such as the Koenigs-Platz, northeast of the Tiergarten, Leipziger-Platz and Gendarmen-Markt, with its two churches and Royal Theatre. In Dresden, the Zwinger, with all its many departments, the Royal Palace, the Princes Palace, the Court Church and the Royal Theatre, are grouped, and joined by the Brühl Terrace with another group to the west. The Kremlin, Moscow, with its numerous cathedrals, palaces, convents, Arsenal, Tribunal and Synode, has frequently been referred to. Stuttgart boasts of an effective centre with the Palace as the focus about which are located the principal buildings of Wurtemberg.

In Paris, there is first of all the Ile de la Cité, with the Palace of Justice, Sainte-Chapelle, Tribunal de Commerce, Prefecture de Police, the Hospital Hôtel Dieu and Notre Dame, with the Hôtel de Ville immediately across the Seine. The Louvre is a centre in itself, but emphasis is added by the Mairie of the First Arrondissement and the Church of St. Germain-l'Auxerrois to the east and the Palais Royal to the north. The Pantheon and the Sorbonne, with the many other schools, libraries and chapels adjoining, form a centre of education and civic patriotism in another part of the city.

In Brussels, the Grande Place, about which have stood for generations the Hôtel de Ville, Maison du Roi and the guild halls of the associations that formerly governed the city, has been restored and redecorated during the past few years. The city authorities have granted subsidies to the private owners to decorate and restore the facades in harmony with the general plan, and where the landlords could not be induced to co-operate, the city has purchased the buildings and has done the work itself. The halls date from the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, and when the plan is completed, Brussels will have one of the most interesting and artistic centres in Europe, although not so grand as those of Berlin, Paris or Vienna. Other cities in Belgium are following the example of Brussels.

Many other instances could be cited from small as well as large cities, but to Vienna must be given the palm for the most comprehensive artistic scheme. Along the Ringstrasse or about the parks which border it, are to be found nearly all of the more prominent public buildings of the city. This ring separates the Inner from the Outer City, and such excellent taste has been used in the location and planning of buildings, monuments, statuary, fountains, parks, etc., that it is the finest civic centre to be found in the world.

The artistic value of civic centres is evident. They give opportunity for a grandeur of treatment, a harmony of varying structures and an effective combination of all the arts, that is not afforded by one building or a large number of unrelated buildings scattered throughout the city. The effect, one may say, increases in geometrical ratio and arouses civic pride and patriotism to a marked degree.

It only requires a little foresight, a well-considered plan, and a determination not to be swayed by interests which may wish, for selfish reasons, to secure the location of buildings elsewhere than where planned. The entire scheme does not need to be completed at the moment, but as buildings are needed and as funds are secured, the project may be pushed; only, there must be a broad comprehensive plan to follow—a goal to be reached.

Transit Facilities.

The advantages of locations near parks or open spaces and of grouping are so evident that semi-public buildings have been similarly treated, such as cathedrals (near the old market places), theatres, opera houses, banks, and especially railway stations, which need open spaces to accommodate the crowds and which, as vestibules to the city, should be so attractive as to impress the newcomer favorably the moment he sets foot within the city. Instances of effective treatment, often by the use of landscape gardening, statuary and a well arranged street plan, are found in Berlin (Lehrter Bahnhof), Paris (Gare d'Orleans), Rotterdam (central station), Antwerp (Station du Sud), Mainz, Tours, Rheims, Strassburg, Budapest, Cologne, etc. The railroads appreciate the financial advantage of attractive terminals, and frequently have improved the stations and their surroundings upon their own initiative.

Generally the railroad approach to a city is very forbidding whether viewed from the train or from the streets in the vicinity. The presence of tracks or yards usually has such a deleterious effect that the district in which they are is the most unattractive in the city. Partially to remove this ugliness and partially upon purely utilitarian grounds, there has been a strong movement for either the elevation or the depression of the tracks below the street level. The latter is considered preferable, because it removes all noise and dirt and there is no disfiguration of the streets whatever. The advent of electricity as a motive power has greatly facilitated immediate action. Copenhagen is formulating a scheme to place all tracks in the heart of the city underground, to roof over the yards, perhaps laying out a park thereon, to unite the principal stations by subways and to build a central station that shall be artistic as well as commodious. Brussels is considering a subway to connect its two important stations. Paris is extending the underground every year, ultimately to connect all of the railroad stations. Vienna, acting with the Austrian Government, put most of the Stadtbahn underground some years ago and so utilized an old branch of the Danube, which now carries very little water, for the subway that the work was accomplished with comparative ease. There are but few places where the tracks appear above ground, and the central portion of the city is thus spared the evils of a surface or an elevated road.

Where elevated roads have been built within the last few years, strenuous efforts have been put forth to make the structure and stations as artistic as possible. A

comparison between the old Stadtbahn, which connects the stations of the steam railroads, and the new electric Hochbahn in Berlin shows how great has been the progress in civic art. An elevated railroad is certain to be objectionable, but the Hochbahn is a great improvement over its predecessors in Europe and America. The curved line is more generally used and ornamental fixtures have been introduced. The route follows a canal for considerable distance, and the trees which border it hide the structure and smother the noise. A few of the stations are quite artistic and add to the beauty of the parks or streets in which they are located rather than detract from it. The structures which carry the steam railroads over the streets of Hamburg are also artistic, and the stations of the underground in Vienna, Paris and Budapest are usually in good taste.

Harbor and River Improvement.

The river fronts and harbors of cities, like railroad approaches, are apt to be inartistic, to some extent necessarily so perhaps, because of the nature of the business; but that they can be made attractive has been proved by European cities. In the first place, substantial quays and buildings add very greatly to their appearance. Cologne has a stone embankment and stone quays along almost all of its river front, bordered with a tree-lined street. Budapest has a similar system, except that the street is everywhere very much higher than the quays, and that outside of the trees which line the promenade there is a street car line. The space immediately beneath the tracks and at the rear of the quay, which is 10 to 20 feet below the tracks, is used for storage purposes. This arrangement makes the river front so attractive that it is lined with fine buildings, and a number of public buildings are located there. The walls of the canals of Berlin, of the Seine in Paris, of the water front of Antwerp, of Stockholm and many other cities are built of stone or cement, and in Paris, Berlin and Amsterdam, for example, the banks have been planted with trees which add greatly to their beauty. The substantial brick warehouses upon the quays of Hamburg diminish very much the ugliness of a harbor that does not have many points of beauty.

As already noted, parks and public buildings are frequently located along rivers and harbors, and not only does the water front add to the beauty of the park and buildings, but they make the water front more attractive.

Bridges.

Where there are bridges across the river, these are, perhaps, as important factors as the quays and streets adjoining. Berlin and Paris, because of the frequency with which they have bridged the ~~Elbe~~ ^{Spree} and the Seine, vie with each other for the title of "City of Bridges." All are not artistic and some are very far from it, but the beautiful Pont Alexandre III.—the latest addition to the list in Paris—represents a high

standard of civic art and will set the pace for some time. Pont du Carrousel in Paris and the Schloss, Königin, Belle Alliance and Kurfürsten Brücken in Berlin, also are artistic and deserving of notice. These bridges are small as compared with those in Budapest across the Danube, where the city has built a very attractive cantilever bridge—the Franz Joseph Bridge—and a suspension bridge of beauty. Other instances might be cited from Dresden, Vienna, Amsterdam and Stockholm, the best results having been produced where sculpture has been combined with a bridge of attractive lines to produce a monumental structure.

Bridge Approaches.

The general effect is so largely determined by the character of the approaches that much attention has been paid to proper treatment at the termini. In many instances there is a large open plaza which serves the utilitarian purpose of affording opportunity for the orderly conveyance or divergence of traffic, which is impossible where the streams all centre immediately at the bridge entrance. It also gives dignity to the structure, and where the portal is monumental or emphasized by the use of sculpture, some space is necessary to give a proper setting.

The plazas at the ends of the Norrbro in Stockholm, which carries all of the immense traffic between the old city and the newer district, Norrmalm, on the mainland, the ancient Augustus Bridge across the Elbe in Dresden, the Ober-Main Bridge in Frankfurt, and the Lánčz-Híd in Budapest, show how important are the utilitarian advantages of the plan. Of course where the bridges are merely the continuation of the streets (Strassen-Brücken), and not the arteries into which flow many streams of traffic, large plazas are not necessary, but some space is always an advantage on aesthetic grounds.

Among the best instances of artistic treatment of bridge approaches are the Trocadéro Park, with its statuary, flowers and cascade at the entrance to the Pont d'Iéna, the Avenue Nicolas II., with trees and grass plots leading upon to Pont Alexandre III., on the north, and the Esplanade des Invalides as the southern approach, the Place de la Concorde north of the Pont de la Concorde, Paris; the beautiful small parks at each end of the Lánčz-Híd, Budapest, and the Square d'Avroy, with adjacent boulevards and parks, fronting the Pont de Commerce, Liège.

Budapest is building a new bridge over the Danube, and opposite the approach upon the Ofen side stands the mountainous Blocksberg. High up on the hillside a monument to St. Gellert, who suffered martyrdom here in 1046, has been erected. A few feet below this statue a stream of water will gush forth and tumbling down the rocky side, fall into a pool at street level, thus creating a beautiful vista for the thousands who will throng the bridge. At the other end, the converging point of traffic is two or three blocks from the bridge entrance. This point is emphasized by the erection of two buildings as high as the law will permit, each the reverse (in

main outline) of the other. Upon the corner of each building, next to the street forming the bridge approach, there has been constructed a modest tower, but so different from the surroundings as to indicate at once that there is the beginning of the approach.

Scope of Civic Art.

Civic art concerns itself primarily with the city plan, so as to get the greatest amount of beauty from the union of the fine arts. There are a few matters, however, which might not be included under this head, and yet which pertain to it, as, for example, subjects commemorated by mural paintings for a public building. These are more properly such as belong to the history (real or mythological), life or customs of the city as distinct from other cities. A painting representing Moses in the bull-rushes may be just as fine a work of art when tested by all the canons of art as the paintings in the Pantheon commemorating the life of the patron saint of Paris, Ste. Geneviève. But from the point of view of civic art, many maintain that the former would be used to adorn a city hall with as much propriety as a painting of a bull fight to decorate a modern church. As harmony is one of the fundamental canons of art, it is argued that it should apply to subject as well as to composition, but this is not universally admitted. European cities have not universally followed this rule in the decoration of public buildings. The Paris Hôtel de Ville, generally considered one of the best decorated public buildings, has mural paintings representing hunting, botany, eloquence, philosophy, etc. These are not, it is quite generally admitted, what one would most expect to find there, nor do these receive the attention or approval by those who visit the city hall that is given to scenes from the history of Paris, or of the great men who have moulded the life of the metropolis. And, generally speaking, by far the greater majority of paintings and statuary in the municipal buildings of Europe relate to the history, life and customs of the city in which they are located, and the trend is strongly in this direction.

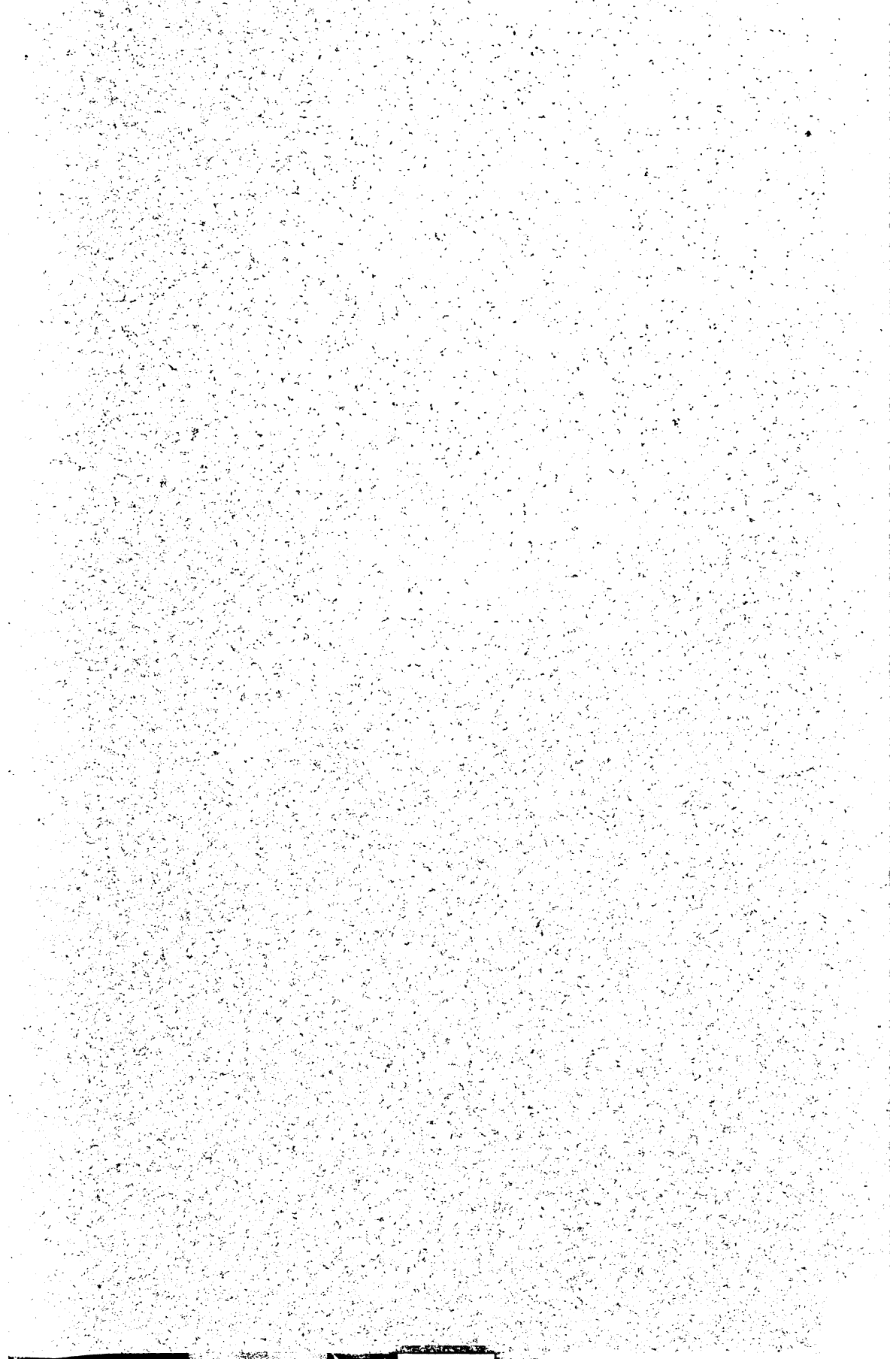
To cite a few instances: The City Hall of Copenhagen, now nearing completion, bears the impress throughout of Copenhagen life, and there is hardly a decorative feature in the structure that does not relate to that city alone. Its history, its industry, its commerce are commemorated, and the artists seemed to have found ample opportunity for the exercise of their ability. The same is true of the City Halls of Hamburg, Berlin, Vienna, Munich and many others. The Hôtel de Ville of Brussels has, among other things, tapestries representing the artisans whose guilds formerly ruled the city. Antwerp revels in historical paintings; there is little else.

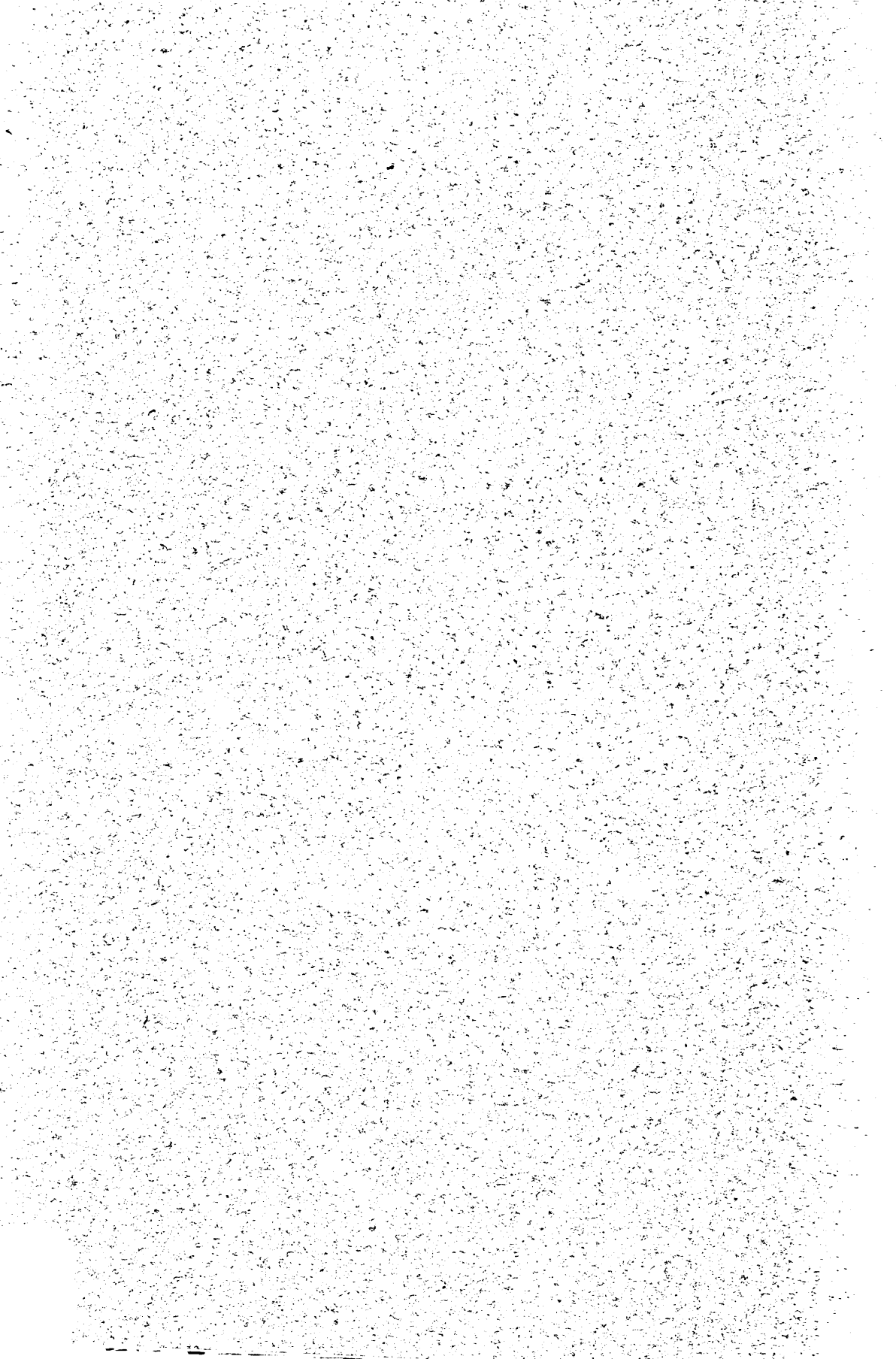
It is hardly necessary to add, after citing instance upon instance of civic art, that the movement has a firm foothold in European cities. There is no discussion of its merits; these are taken for granted; the question was long ago settled, if it ever was mooted. Everything now centres about the question: What are the most effective

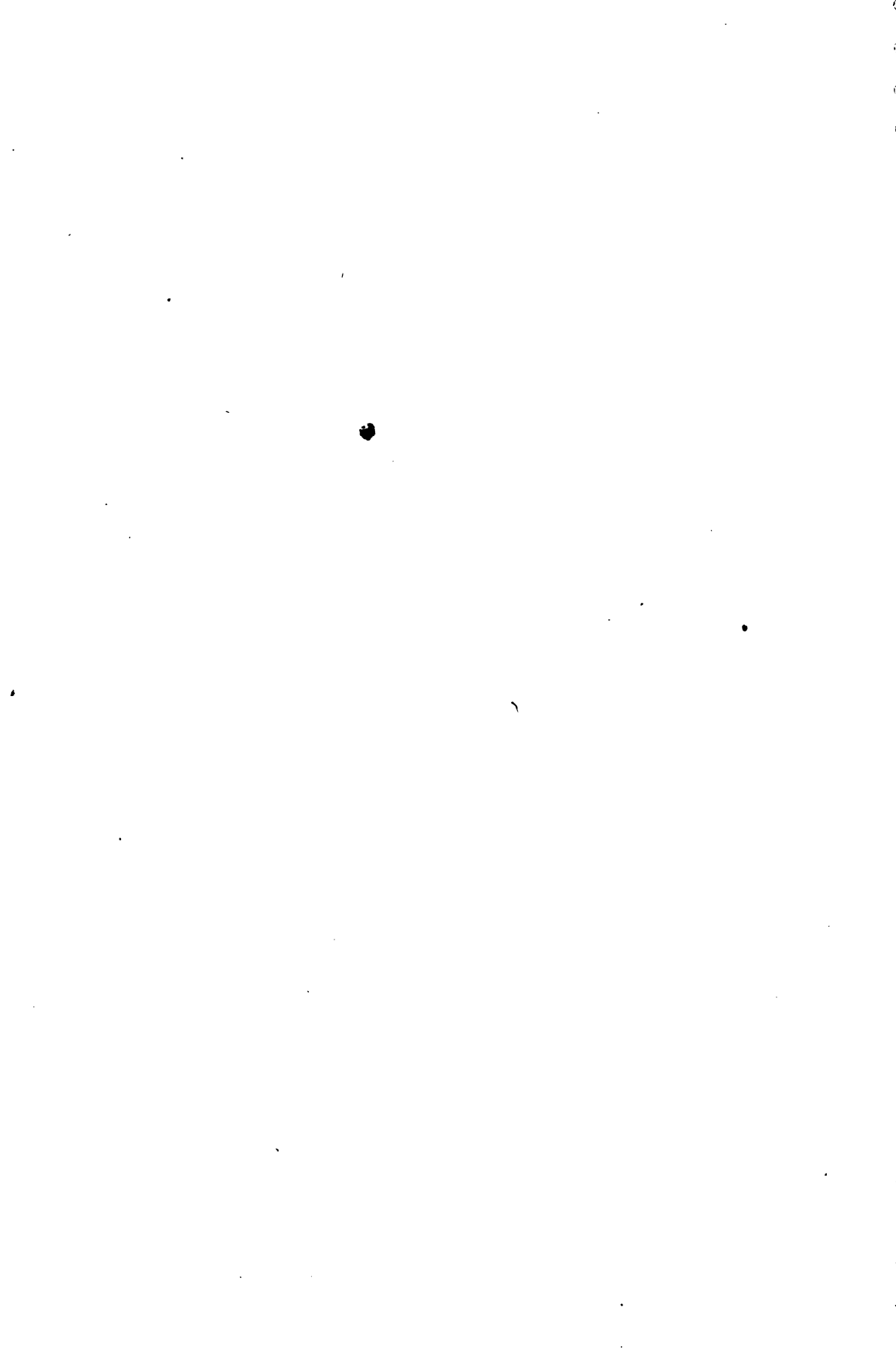
methods of beautifying cities? That, too, is coming to be the situation in the United States, and rapid progress has been made within the last few years. In one direction particularly do we have the advantage. In Europe the attitude of the citizen toward the city is that of dependence. The attitude of the city toward the citizen is that of independence. But in American cities the attitude of each toward the other is that of interdependence. The highest results can only be attained by mutual co-operation, city officials with citizens and citizens with city officials. This is generally lacking in Europe. It is a most promising sign in America.

Respectfully submitted,

MILO R. MALTBY, Assistant Secretary.









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